MARVEL
CONAN THE KING
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32
JAN

JUGGERNAUT

GO ON, OLD MAN, PRAY TO MITRA BEFORE WE CRUCIFY YOU. PRAY THAT CONAN RIDES BACK FROM THE GRAVE TO SAVE YOU.

THE HOUR OF THE DRAGON HAS RETURNED. THE NEMEDIAN BANNER FLIES OVER THE RUINS OF AN AQUILONIAN VILLAGE ON THE WEST BANK OF THE KHOROTAS RIVER, NORTH OF TARANTIA, AS THE ARMIES OF NEMEDIA, OPHIR, AND ARGOS TIGHTEN THEIR GRIP ON THE CITY. WITH THE REPORT THAT KING CONAN HAS BEEN KILLED BY THE PICTS ON THE FRONTIER, THE AQUILONIAN PEOPLE HAVE ALL BUT GIVEN UP HOPE...

WRITTEN BY: **DON KRAAR**
PENCILS BY: **MIKE DOCHERTY**
INKS BY: **VINCE COLLETTA**
LETTERS BY: **JANICE CHIANG**
COLORS BY: **GEORGE ROUSSOS**
EDITED BY: **LARRY HAMA**
EDITOR IN CHIEF: **JIM SHOOTER**

I SWEAR BY MITRA THAT I WOULD DIE CONTENT IF I COULD BUT CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE KING RETURNING TO SAVE OUR LAND.

DOCHERTY

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GO ON, YOU'RE ENTITLED TO A FOOLISH DREAM BEFORE WE HOIST YOU UP ON A CROSS.

JUST A GLIMPSE OF HIM...

...WITH HIS ARMOR SHINING IN THE SUN...

...RIDING OUT OF THE SMOKE...

GO ON, YOU OLD FOOL, TELL US WHAT ELSE YOU SEE?

THERE, I CAN SEE HIM ON HORSEBACK...

YOU'VE GONE MAD.

...WITH HIS SHIELD THAT BEARS THE LION CREST...

...AND HIS BLUE EYES BLAZING.

WHAT KIND OF APPARITION IS THIS?

GAK!

IF YOU NEVER SAW...

...THE KING OF AQUILONIA IN LIFE...

...THEN YOU'LL MEET HIM...

...IN DEATH.

ARE YOU REAL OR AN APPARITION? TELL ME FOR I DO NOT TRUST MY SENSES.

HOLD OUT YOUR HANDS AND SEE.

CONAN, MY KING!

THE NEMEDIANS SLAUGHTERED EVERY ABLE BODIED MAN IN THE VILLAGE. THE BOY WATCHED HIS FATHER DIE DEFENDING IT.

SON, IF YOUR FATHER DIED DEFENDING AQUILONIA, THEN HE WAS MY FRIEND.

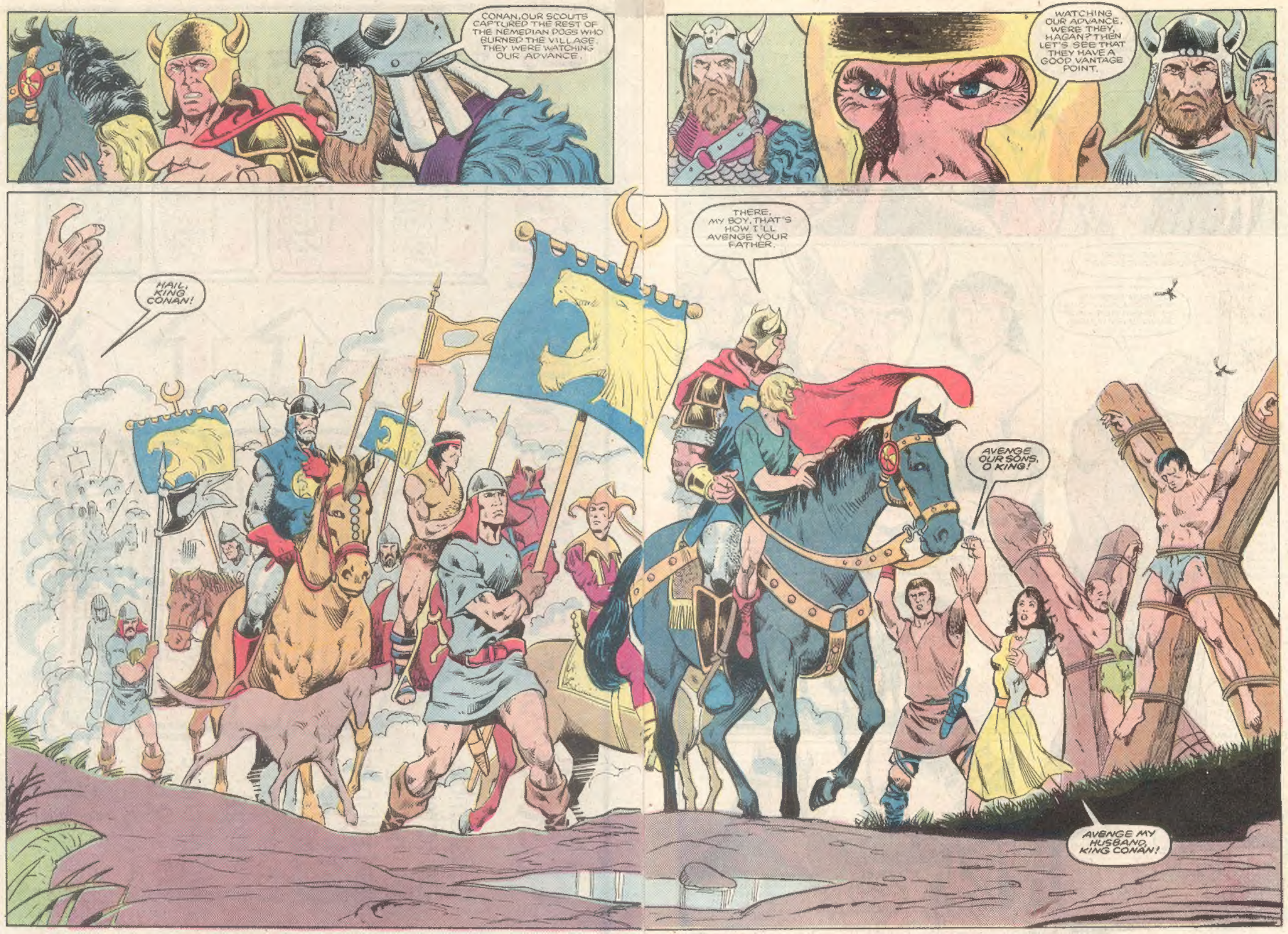
COME WITH ME...

...AND I'LL SHOW YOU HOW WE PUNISH THE DOGS THAT DID THIS.

MY KING, THE NEMEDIANS HAVE BURNED EVERYTHING BETWEEN HERE AND THE RIVER. THERE MAY BE NO WAY FOR YOUR TROOPS TO CROSS THE KHOROTAS.

CONAN, MY LIEGE...

...WE'VE ROUNDED UP THE REST OF THE VERMIN THAT DID THIS.


CONAN, OUR SCOUTS CAPTURED THE REST OF THE NEMEDIAN DOGS WHO BURNED THE VILLAGE. THEY WERE WATCHING OUR ADVANCE.
WATCHING OUR ADVANCE, WERE THEY, HAGAN? THEN LET'S SEE THAT THEY HAVE A GOOD VANTAGE POINT.
HAIL, KING CONAN!
THERE, MY BOY, THAT'S HOW I'LL AVENGE YOUR FATHER.
AVENGE OUR SONS, O KING!
AVENGE MY HUSBAND, KING CONAN!

ZELATA?!

WELCOME BACK FROM THE DEAD, O GREAT KING.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR EYES, ZELATA?

QUEEN LEORA'S OPHIRIAN AMAZONS PUT THEM OUT AND SLEW MY FAMILIARS.

BUT, IT WAS A BLESSING IN DISGUISE, FOR NOW MY OCCULT POWERS HAVE ONLY GROWN GREATER.

I FORETOLD YOUR COMING AND I FORETOLD THAT YOU WOULD BRING ME A NEW SET OF EYES.

GO WITH HER, SON, AND BE HER EYES.

MAKE HASTE, CONAN. GAIUS FLAVIUS HOLDS THE FAR BANK OF THE KHOROTAS RIVER AGAINST GREAT ODDS.

SERVIUS GALLANNUS, TAKE YOUR CAVALRY FORWARD AND SECURE THE NEAR BANK OF THE RIVER.

ON THE WESTERN BANK OF THE KHOROTAS RIVER, THE KING MASSES HIS TROOPS...

MY KING, ONCE WE FORD THE RIVER, THERE WILL BE NO RETREAT. WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT WITH THE RIVER AT OUR BACKS.

YOU'RE RIGHT, PALLANTIDES. BUT, WE HAVE TO CROSS THE KHOROTAS TO REACH TARANTIA AND IF WE DON'T CROSS NOW WE MAY NEVER BE ABLE TO.

SOUND OFFICERS' CALL!

I'M GOING TO TARANTIA, ALONE IF I HAVE TO. ANYONE WHO HAS NO STOMACH FOR WHAT IS TO COME SHOULD LEAVE NOW.

PUT THE MATTER TO YOUR MEN AND TELL THEM THAT ANYONE WHO WANTS OUT CAN LEAVE NOW WITH HONOR.

CONQUEST OR DEATH!

THE KING'S ARMY SPEAKS WITH ONE VOICE...

QUINTUS, YOU'RE CHIEF ENGINEER, TELL ME HOW WE FORD A SWIFT FLOWING RIVER LIKE THIS.

THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE, MY KING, BUT IT'S NO EASY.

FIRST WE HAVE TO GET A LENGTH OF ROPE ACROSS THE RIVER TO THE FAR BANK. THAT'S NOT AN EASY TRICK WITH THIS CURRENT.

AYE, AND IT'S NO EASY TRICK FOR GAIUS FLAVIUS TO HOLD THE FAR SIDE AGAINST SUCH ODDS.

HOW LONG CAN YOU HOLD OUT, GAIUS?

'TIL WE SHED THE LAST DROP OF OUR BLOOD, MY KING!

THEN I'LL JOIN YOU ON THE FAR SIDE OR IN VALHALLA!

CONN, NO!

THAT'S IT, KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN AND TAKE LONG STROKES LIKE I TAUGHT YOU, CONN!

LONG LIVE THE PRINCE!

BE A MAN

I'LL LEARN MY LESSONS WELL GAUTA.

AYE, THAT YOU DID, MY PRINCE.

FALLANTIDES, GIVE THE ORDER TO BREAK RANKS AND CUT TIMBER FOR RAFTS.

CONAN, MY KING, IT WILL BE NIGHTFALL BEFORE WE CAN BEGIN TO CROSS.

IT'S TONIGHT OR NEVER THE CHOICE HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE.

AFTER SUNDOWN

HEAVE, MAN, OUR COMRADES ARE DYING ON THE FAR SHORE

I KNOW YOUR MEN ARE TIRED, BUT THERE'LL BE NO REST UNTIL WE'VE SECURED OUR POSITION

WE'LL HOLD COUNCIL OF WAR TOMORROW.

AYE FATHER THEY MAY BE

IN TARANT A THE SHORTAGE OF FOOD ONLY GROWS WORSE AND BLAME FALLS ON THE FOLLOWERS OF ANURA

HADRATHUS, WITH THE CITY ON THE BRINK OF STARVATION, I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I CAN PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE.

MY QUEEN, IF WE ONLY HAD TO DEAL WITH THE SLANDEROUS CHARGE OF HOARDING FOOD IT WOULD NOT BE SO BAD BUT NOW CRASSUS BLAMES US FOR THE DEATH OF DEXITHEUS.

AND CRASSUS HAS TAKEN IT UPON HIMSELF TO CONVENE AN INQUISITION AGAINST MY WISHES

HE HAS EVEN MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO SEE RADEGUND SINCE SHE BECAME A HAND-MAIDEN OF MITRA

AND CRASSUS DEMANDS THAT WE PURGE THE ANURANS EVEN WHILE WE'RE UNDER SIEGE

MY QUEEN, WE WILL PROVE OUR LOYALTY IF ONLY YOU WILL LET US

GIVE ME A LITTLE TIME TO LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SHORTAGE OF FOOD IN THE CITY SOMEONE IS CERTAINLY HOARDING IT, BUT IT IS NOT THE FOLLOWERS OF ASURA

THERE IS AN OLD SUBTERRANEAN PASSAGE INTO THE TEMPLE OF MITRA IF THE PRINCESS RADEGUND IS BEING HELD AGAINST HER WILL I MAY BE ABLE TO BRING HER OUT.

BE CAREFUL, HADRATHUS, I BELIEVE WE HAVE CAUSE TO FEAR CRASSUS.

THAT I HAVE KNOWN FOR A LONG TIME MY QUEEN.

MY BROTHERS CONTINUE YOUR [illegible] BY THE STORM CHANNEL IF PRINCE CONN REACHED THE KING THAT IS HOW THEY'LL SEND WORD TO US.

I'LL GO NOW TO TRY AND FIND THE PRINCESS RADEGUND IN THE TEMPLE OF MITRA IF I HAVE NOT RETURNED IN GOOD TIME INFORM THE QUEEN

MAY ASURA GUIDE YOU, HADRATHUS.

HADRATHUS IS TAKING A GREAT RISK.

AYE BUT HE KNOWS THESE PASSAGE-WAYS BETTER THAN ANY MAN LIVING

WE HAVE SPREAD THE RUMOR THAT KING CONAN

...WAS SLAIN ON THE FRONTIER BY THE PICTS

AND THE PEOPLE HAVE BEGUN TO GIVE IT CREDENCE

AT ANY RATE THERE IS NOTHING THE QUEEN WILL BE ABLE TO DO TO STOP US.

AS LONG AS WE HOLD HER DAUGHTER PRINCESS RADEGUND HOSTAGE

AT MIDNIGHT TONIGHT WE WILL OPEN THE CITY GATES FOR OUR FRIENDS OUTSIDE BUT FIRST...

WE WILL SEIZE THE ROYAL PALACE AND TAKE QUEEN ZENOBIA PRISONER THE PALACE GUARD WILL NOT DARE TO OPPOSE US WHEN WE HAVE HER

MY PRINCESS..

AGHHHHNEEEEEEEEE...

SEIZE HIM

NO, NO, MY PRINCESS

WELL, WELL, NOT ONLY HAS THE PRINCESS SUBMITTED TO MY WILL, BUT SHE SOUNDS THE ALARM AT THE SIGHT OF AN ASURAN

AND NOW I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO *INTERVIEW* YOU ABOUT THE HEART OF AHIRMAN.

THE POWER OF THIS JEWEL, WHICH YOU HAVE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE KING, HAVE YET TO BE TAPPED.

JUST TELL ME WHERE TO FIND THE HEART OF [illegible] AND ALL OF YOUR TROUBLES WILL CEASE, HAGHATHOS.

YOU'LL HAVE TO TRY HARDER, [illegible].

I'LL DIE FIRST BEFORE I BETRAY THE KING.

KING CONAN'S CAMP ON THE EAST BANK OF THE KHOROTAS RIVER, NORTH OF TARANTIA

THE ENEMY [illegible] ATTACK AT THEIR [illegible] FACE!!

WE ARE FACING THE NEMBD ANS.

SOON, THEY'LL BE REINFORCED BY THE ARMIES OF ARGOS AND OPHIR AS WELL AS MERCENARIES FROM CORINTHIA AND KOTH.

OUR STRATEGY DEPENDS ON GETTING A COURIER INTO TARANTA. THE CITY GARRISON MUST PRESENT A SECOND FRONT AS A DIVERSION FOR OUR ATTACK

HOW LONG DO OUR MEN NEED TO BE READY TO FIGHT, PALLANTIDES.

FIVE DAYS SHOULD BE ENOUGH, MY LEGE

I'LL GIVE THEM THREE.

NOW, FOR THE COURIER

WE HAVE A MAN OF PROVEN COURAGE, CONAN

AYE, AND A STRONG SWIMMER I KNOW, I TAUGHT HIM MYSELF.

HE WAS BORN IN TARANTIA AND HAS A FAMILY THERE

IF HE HAS EAMON, CAIUS FLAVIUS, AND HA- AN TO WORTH FOR HIM THEN HE SHOULD GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

NO...

MY LIEGE...

I TOLD YOU ONCE BEFORE

...IT'S TIME TO LET THE BOY BECOME A MAN

MOTHER WILL BE WAITING FOR NEWS OF US BETTER THAT SHE SHOULD HEAR IT FROM ME.

AYE AND AS LONG AS YOU ACT LIKE A MAN, IT'S TIME I TREAT YOU LIKE ONE

LATER THAT NIGHT.

THIS BURNT CORK IN OIL WILL GIVE YOU SOME CAMOUFLAGE, CONN THAT'S IT, RUB IT ALL OVER.

IF THING'S GET BAD CONN, CALL OUT TO CROM YOU'RE HALF CIMMERIAN, HE MIGHT LISTEN TO YOU.

BUT WILL HE HELP ME?

NO, BUT IF YOU'RE LUCKY HE WON'T HURL A THUNDERBOLT AT YOU.

THEN HE'LL LET YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO SETTLE MATTERS ON YOUR OWN.

AYE, CALL ON CROM AND REMEMBER. IF YOU NEED A HELPING HAND, TAKE IT.

AND REACH FOR THIS

JUST LET THE CURRENT CARRY YOU DOWNSTREAM FOR AWHILE

HE'LL BE A GREATER KING THAN YOU EVER WERE.

ZELATA

THE GODS HAVE REVEALED IT TO ME, CONAN

THEN I SAY THIS PROPHECY LASTS LATER THEN THAT YOU HAVE TOLD EVERY MAN WANTS HIS SOWN THE BETTER THAN HE IS

KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN, CONN, AND REMEMBER WHAT I SAID

WHEN WE ATTACK TARANTIA, IT WON'T BE LONG THAT I'LL MARRY YOU, I'LL HAVE AN AXONIAN WENCH AS WELL

OUR LIGHT CAVALRY IS POISED TO STRIKE AT

WHAT WAS THAT?

THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE WATER!

OPEN THE CAGES!

ASURA HAS BLESSED US WITH YOUR SAFE RETURN!

PRINCE CONN!

YOUR SISTER, THE PRINCESS RADEGUND IS NOW A HANDMAIDEN OF MITRA AND IS BELIEVED TO BE HELD AGAINST HER WILL.

MY PRINCE, THE SITUATION IS DESPERATE.

AYE, THE CITY IS ON THE BRINK OF STARVATION AND WE ARE BLAMED FOR IT. THE PRIESTS OF MITRA HAVE CONVENED AN INQUISITION

HADRATHUS ENTERED THE TEMPLE OF MITRA SECRETLY TO FIND HER AND HAS NOT RETURNED

WE WERE JUST ABOUT TO INFORM YOUR MOTHER, THE QUEEN WHEN YOU APPEARED

THEN INFORM HER AND CARRY MY SIGNET RING TO HER TO SHOW WHERE THAT I HAVE RETURNED. THE KING WILL ATTACK IN THREE DAYS AND THE CITY GARRISON MUST CREATE A DIVERSION.

NOW I'LL SEARCH FOR HADRATHUS AND MY SISTER

ARE YOU CERTAIN THAT THIS WAS THE PASSAGE?

AYE. MY DRINK! MAY ASURA GUIDE YOU EVERY STEP!

AND MAY CROM RED HIS THUNDER-BOLTS TO HIMSELF

AHHH!

OHHH ..

OHHHHHHH...

OHHH

THAT'S RIGHT MOAN YOU ASTIRAN DOG I'LL SOON HAVE YOU SCREAMING AGAIN

THAT'S ENOUGH!

PRINCE CONN.

CUT HIM LOOSE

IT WILL BE AN HONOR KILLING YOU

THE HONOR IS MINE

HALRATHUS.

PLEASE MY PRINCE, YOU'VE GOT TO STOP CRASSUS WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME

THE TRAITORS ARE ON THEIR WAY TO THE ROYAL PALACE TO KIDNAP AND MURDER THE QUEEN

HOLD ON TO ME, HADRATHUS, I'LL NEED YOU TO GUIDE ME THERE

I SAW CRASSUS CONSPIRING WITH OUR ENEMIES WHEN I WAS TRYING TO REACH MY FATHER

HE HAS ALSO CONSPIRED WITH TRAITORS HERE TO OPEN THE CITY GATES BEFORE DAWN TO OUR ENEMIES

THE CITY IS ON THE BRINK OF STARVATION AND LOOK AT IT - ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED TARANTIA FOR MONTHS.

THE TRAITORS HOARDED IT IN THIS OLD RESERVOIR AND BLAMED THE SHORTAGE ON MY PEOPLE

AT THE ROYAL PALACE

MY QUEEN, PRINCE CONN ASKED US TO PRESENT HIS SIGNET RING TO YOU AS PROOF OF HIS RETURN

QUEEN ZENOBIA, THE KING'S ARMY HAS CROSSED THE KHOROTAS AND WILL ATTACK IN THREE DAYS

THE PRINCE SENT US AHEAD WHILE HE SEARCHES FOR HADRATHUS UNDER THE TEMPLE OF MITRA.

THIS IS MY SON'S SIGNET RING. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT OF THAT

WE WOULD DO WELL TO EXERCISE CAUTION, MY QUEEN.

CONAN TRUSTS THE ASURANS. THAT IS ENOUGH FOR ME.

QUEEN ZENOBIA, THE HIGH PRIEST OF MITRA *DEMANDS AN AUDIENCE*

HOW FARE YOU NTHUL[illegible]ON LORD, [illegible]VOUS, WITH MEN AT ARMS AND NOBLES WHO ARE OUT OF FAVOR WITH THE COURT

IT NEEDN'T CONCERN YOU MUCH LONGER WE'VE COME TO RELIEVE YOU OF THE HEART OF AHIRMAN AND THE BURDEN OF ROYALTY

KING CONAN IS DEAD AND YOUR REIGN IS OVER.

I HAVE PROOF THAT CONAN LIVES

YOU HAVE UNDER-ESTIMATED THE KING, CRASSUS.

AND YOU UNDERESTIMATED THE PRINCE!

COME ON WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE!

BE QUICK ABOUT IT!

GRAB A SWORD AND LEND A HAND, TRUCKO.

WITH PLEASURE, CONN

ARGH.

THAT'S TENDER MERCY FOR TRAITORS!

HACKATHUS

GET THEM OUT OF HERE!

UGHHH ..

GET BEHIND ME TRAITERO!

NOW!

OUR FAITH FORBIDS US

AND I EQUATED THE ARMOR OF GOD

IS IT MUCH FARTHER

SHOW THEM HOW WE REWARD SUCH NOBILITY

STEADY TRUCERO, IT'S NOT MUCH FARTHER.

YOU'VE LOST A GREAT DEAL OF BLOOD MY FRIEND.

NOW

QUICKLY, THE QUEEN NEEDS YOUR HELP!

COUNT TRUCERO PRINCE CONN'

BRING A SURGEON FOR HIM SOONER

STAY WITH HIM HADRATHUS

THE REST OF YOU FOLLOW ME THERE'S WORK TO BE DONE!

WE HAVE NO TIME TO LOSE THE TRAITORS ARE GOING TO OPEN THE MAIN GATE FOR OUR ENEMIES

BARON ENDORE!

PRINCE CONN-- TAKE HIM!

TAKE ME YOURSELF, IF YOU CAN, YOU TRAITOROUS DOG!

VERY WELL

...I SWORE I'D BE YOUR FAMILY'S EXECUTIONER

HERE-- MAKE YOUR PLACE IN HELL!

CLANK CLANK

YOU

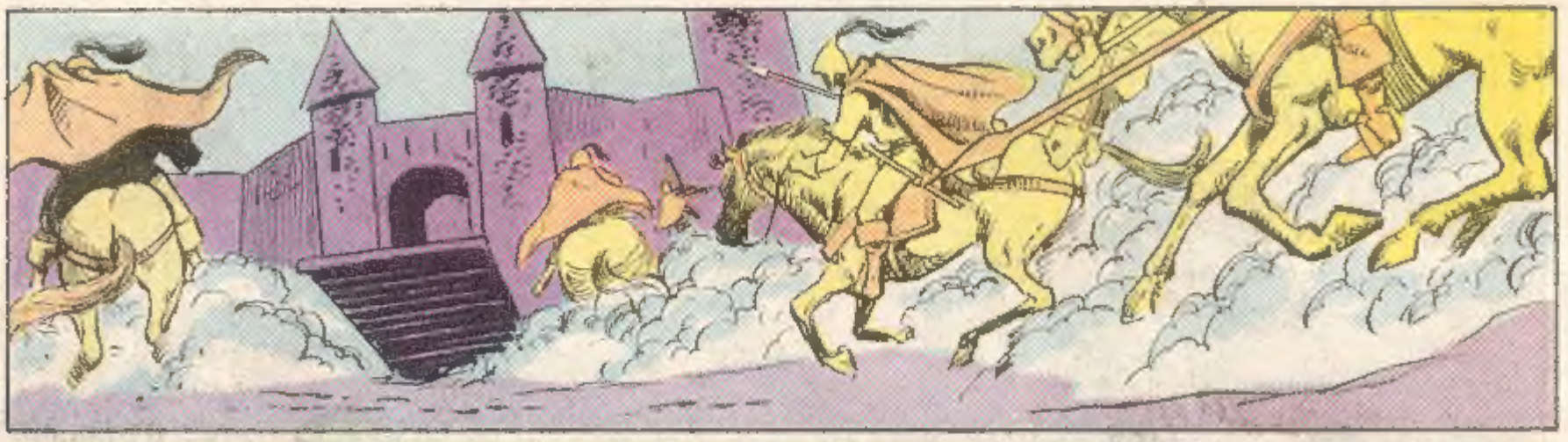
AYE IT S ME, COUNT

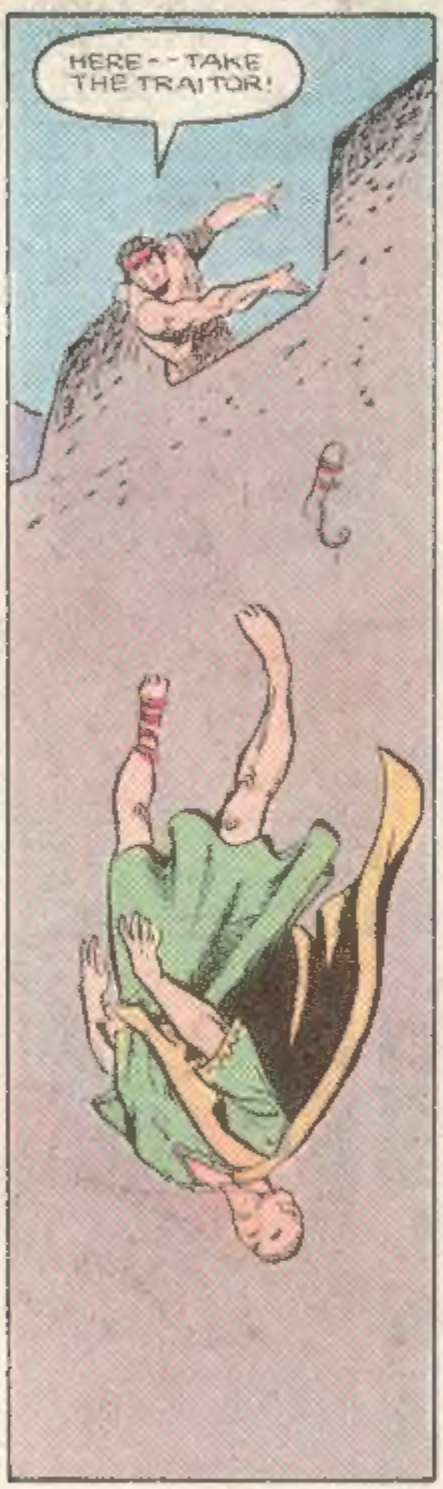
BAL T TO PAY YOU FOR YOUR TREACHERY

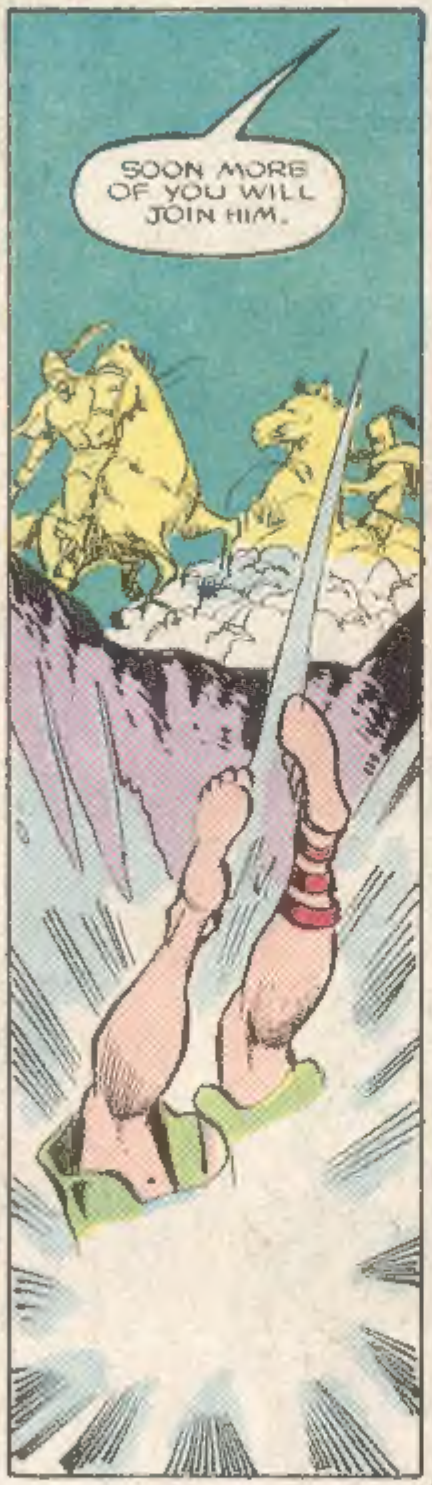
I HONOR MY SWORD TOO MUCH TO SULLY IT WITH MORE TRAITOR'S BLOOD TODAY

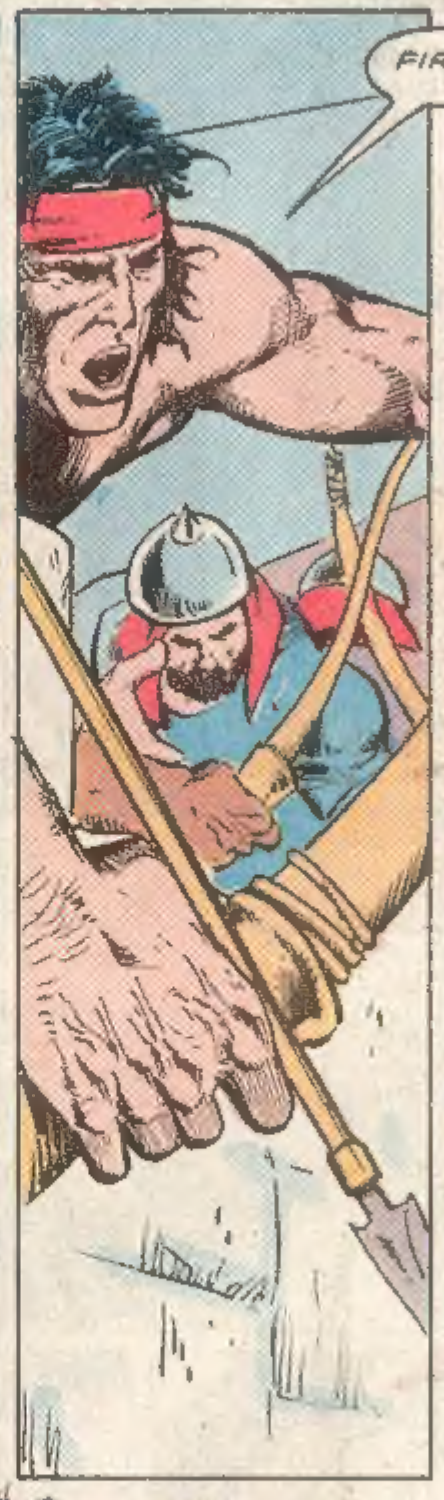
MY PRINCE, THE JACKALS ARE BEATEN.

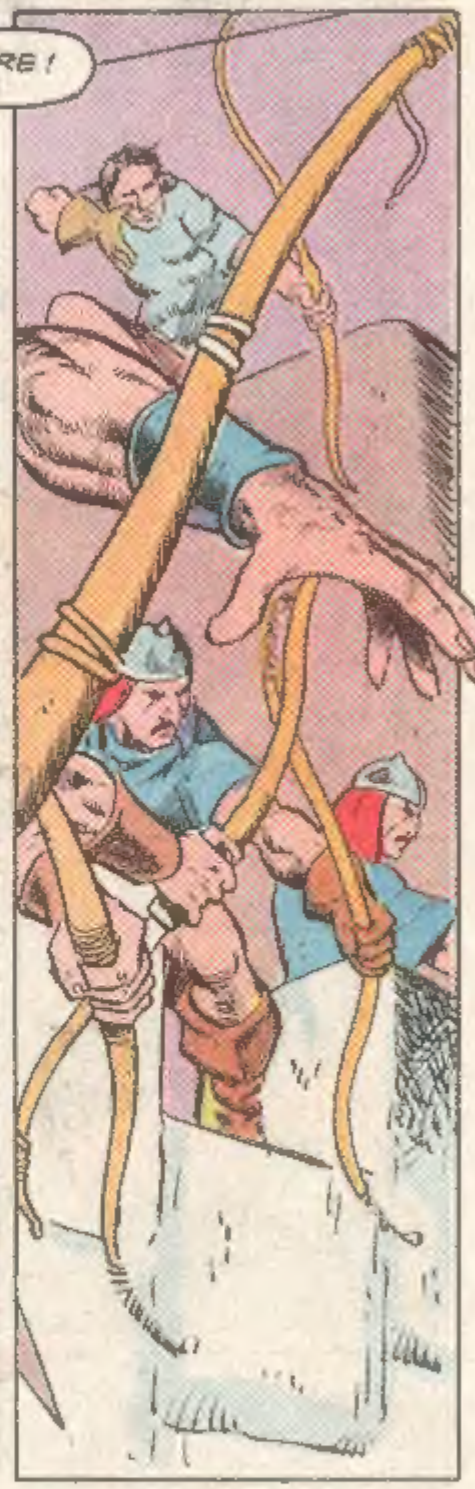
WE ST HAVE TO DEAL W TH THE ENEMY CAVALRY THAT IS APPROACH NG

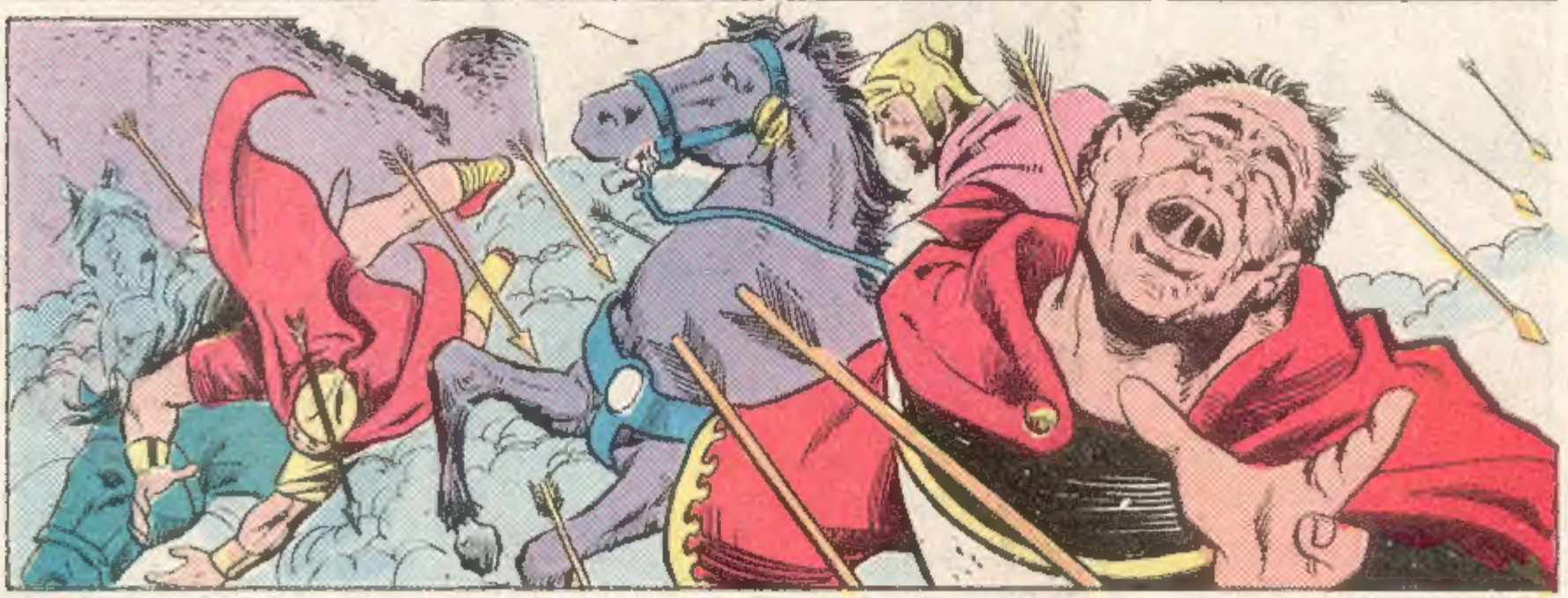



HERE--TAKE THE TRAITOR!


SOON MORE OF YOU WILL JOIN HIM.


FIRE!





CONN, YOU'VE SAVED US FOR AT LEAST ONE MORE DAY. I PRAY TO MITRA THAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO TURN THE TIDE FOR US.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, MOTHER?

COUNT TROCERO IS TOO BADLY WOUNDED TO LEAD OUR TROOPS. THE COMMAND RIGHTFULLY BELONGS TO YOU, NOW.

THEN I HOPE TO BE WORTHY OF IT, MOTHER.

BUT, FIRST WE HAVE TO FEED OUR PEOPLE WITH THE FOOD THE TRAITORS HOARDED.

AND THEN I HAVE TO FIND RAREGUND AND CRASSUS.

IN KING CONAN'S CAMP ON THE KHOROTAS RIVER...

THREE DAYS IS PRECIOUS LITTLE TIME TO PREPARE TO MEET DEATH, MY KING.

DEATH IS NOT PARTICULAR ABOUT WHEN AND WHERE IT MEETS US.

AND IT HAS NO FAVORITES.

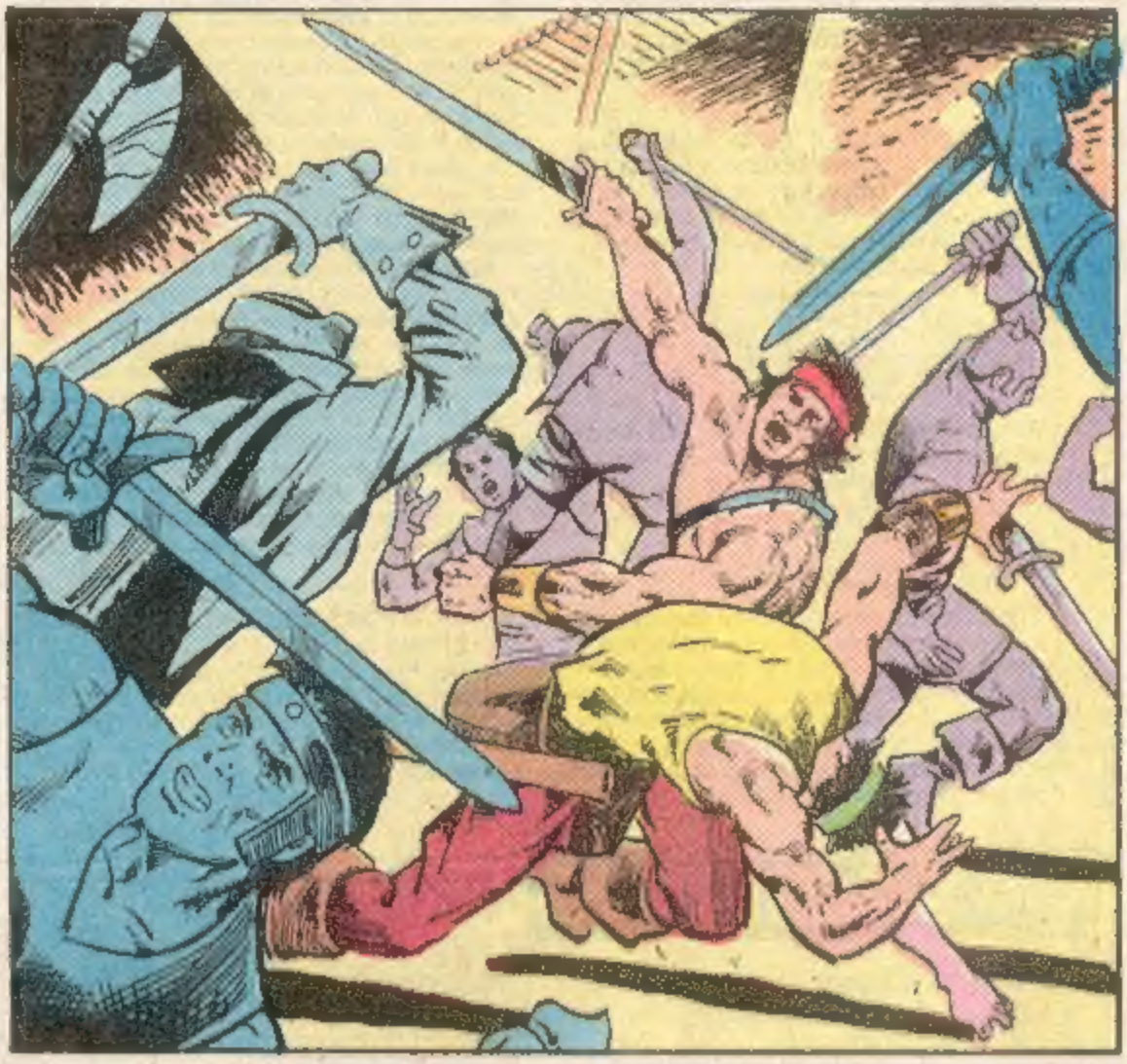
CONTINUED IN ISSUE #33 - -
DAY OF WRATH

KING CONAN

℅ MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

LARRY HAMA
EDITOR
PAT REDDING
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: If you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!



Dear CTK Staff:

By Crom! I just finished reading CONAN THE KING #30. Seeing the elite guards of King Conan massacred by the Picts left me overwhelmed for hours. My favorite group of guards, the Black Dragons, being speared, arrowed and butchered to death by Picts is simply shocking!

Why did they all have to be killed? I expected a few of them, or at least Leonidas, to have managed to escape.

Please make up for this grand mistake by getting more recruits for the Black Dragons. Maybe make Prince Conn and Rufio members also? I'm sure they deserve to be in the elite guards of King Conan.

Beside from that, everything else was a masterpiece of the best battle scenes I've seen in CTK in a long time.

Just keep up the excellent work done, CTK staff. The art of Mr. Mike Docherty was exceptional! I hope he can become the regular artist of CTK.

It is the kind of story and art like CTK #30 that makes me keep collecting CONAN THE KING.

Anthony Gaudier
No address given.

Dear Killer (Marvel),

Why have you killed the whole of the Black Dragons off in so short a time and relatively easily at that?

The Black Dragons are supposed to be the best, and they got wasted like so much trash. Is this telling us that there will be a better Dragon team?

Killing them off does show that the Picts are ruthless and sets a good sense of destruction to the elite of Conan's protectors, but it is still a bad mistake.

Now to my main grief, the death of Syan-lin, who, in my book, was the best of all.

You should have had him live. He would have made a brilliant comrade-in-arms for Conan or Conn in some Eastern adventures to find out what Conn's been doing since he rode off to embrace his dark destiny. I say this because I can see the story line going East quite soon after the war with the Nemedia/Ophir/Argos combination.

May a crab from the Eastern Sea bear the face of Syan-Lin.

Give my love to Radegund!

M. Hodges
5 Brooks Cottages
Carlton Hill
Carlton,
Nottingham, England

Dear Marvel,

For a long time, I have been reading CONAN THE KING. If you knew me, you would call me a "Sword and Sorceror" fanaticist. I love stories of swashbuckling heroes fighting against all odds for a purse of gold or the hand of a comely wench.

Out of all the comics I have read, CONAN THE KING is, by far, the best. Each time I pick an issue up and start reading it, I feel like I'm there, fighting beside Conan. It's a relief from everyday life.

Congratulations on an excellent comic. Please keep those issues rolling into my newsagent's stand.

I'd like to regard you all as my mates, both the Marvel Comics Group and fellow readers, near and far.

Chris Spence
56 Clarence St.
Bellerive, Hobart
Tasmania, Australia
7018

Dear Black Dragon Slayers,

YEEAARRRRG!! You actually did it! You killed 'em all! You murderers! All the Black Dragons are dead. Just when things between Radgund and Leonidas were getting interesting! As each Dragon fell, it seemed that you were carving my heart in two. *Please* bring them back!

Justin Ginn
3000 Fox Spring Rd.
Garberville, VA
95440

Dear Aquilonians,

King Conan is my kind of comic. It's chock full of action and more action! I'm glad that Conn is back and his companion Rufio. What a guy, bringing him back to Conan. I have two questions: why did all of the King's Black Dragons have to die, and how (in page 5, panel 1) did a Pict have an arrow in him when it looked like none of the Black Dragons had any bows and arrows?

Despite these mistakes, Conan is a totally awesome comic.

Jeff Longfellow
882 East Seminhan
Mooneston, IL

Dear Don,

My friend and I, after reading CONAN THE KING #30, decided to write our very first letter to Marvel. We have enjoyed CONAN THE KING since the very beginning. We are very sorry to see that all the Black Dragons have died, since we found them a very important part of the CONAN THE KING comic books. We found the art fantastic! But if you sons of she-jackals don't get more Dragons, by Crom, we'll have your heads on a pike!! We are especially waiting to get the **Official Handbook of the Conan Universe**. How about Conan getting his own comic, of his own adventures, which could possibly be called "Conan, The Son of the Barbarian King?" And, if you can handle our small order, we'll invite you down for pizza.

Steven Weagle
Garth MacDonald
No address given

Dear Don, Mike, Geoff, Janice, Mike K., George, and Larry,

CONAN THE KING #28, featuring my favorite "Scarlet-tressed, Beautiful Blade Wielder," was excellent. My thanks for this issue.

CONAN THE KING #29 and 30 were simply outstanding. Conn, as regent or acting ruler, shows that he is indeed his father's son, especially in #30. As far as #30 is concerned, one word describes how I feel, "Wow!" The Black Dragons, all dead to the last man! However, they have certainly been avenged. Thank you and good day to all of you.

George A. Williams
Rt. 2, Box 217
Angie, LA 70426

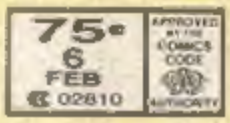
BULLPEN BULLETINS

BY REQUEST. . .

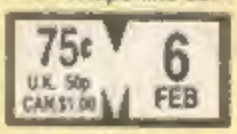
I've been asked by a couple of comics dealers to reprint an item I ran a few years ago explaining what the different markings on Marvel covers mean. Okay . . .

SEEN ONE YOU SEEN 'EM BOTH DEP'T. . .

Many collectors have inquired about the two different types of covers they've seen on Marvel Comics. One type has the price, date, issue number, and some strange numbers and symbols in little boxes, like this:



Another has the price, date, and issue number in an "M" shape like so:



The reason for the two different covers is that our comics are circulated two different ways. Some reach the public via the Curtis Circulation Company and a network of Independent Distributor Wholesalers who service newsstands, drugstores, 7-11's, and other magazine outlets across the country. These comics whose covers have the little boxes. They carry the Curtis seal and, presumably, the strange numbers mean something to wholesaler-type people.

A substantial number of our comics are *not* distributed by Curtis, however. These comics go directly to comics specialty shops and other locations not serviced by I.D. Wholesalers. Since these comics aren't handled by Curtis, they don't need the funny little numbers and can't carry the Curtis seal—hence the artful M design, which so beautifully sets off the remaining info. Clever, huh? That's the scoop.

Apparently, some collectors were worried that the one type might be less valuable as collectables than the other type, or that the little boxes covers were "reprint" or vice versa. Well, how much our comics are worth as collectors' items really is up to you guys. Only in the marketplace can the value of a collectable be determined. We can tell you that the comics with both types of covers are printed at the same time, on the same presses, that neither type is a "reprint" of the other, and that except for the cover markings, the comics are identical in every way. All clear?

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. . .

Chuck Hoy, one of our friendly International Licensing folks informs me that a huge comics convention is coming up soon in *Australia*. Here are the facts:

Convention Name: The Australian Comic Convention
Dates: January 17, 18, 19, 1986
Place: Sidney Opera House
Guests: Stan Lee, Will Eisner, Jim Steranko, Frantz Kantor (An Australian Comics person)
Sponsors: Comic Empire Pty, Ltd. and Federal Publishing (Marvel's Australian licensed publisher!)
For information: Richard Rae, 25 Coward Street, Mascot NSW 2020 AUSTRALIA, Telex: AA22922

I hear it's going to be a very well organized affair with over *ten thousand* fans expected to attend. Wow. Sounds like a blast.

I don't imagine *too* many of you North American readers will be able to bop over to Australia and check it out, but isn't it a totally outrageous idea?! Tell you what—if you do make it to the Con, drop me a line and tell me all about it. I'll print the best Con Report on this page!

NEXT MONTH . . .

The winners of the Marvel Try-Out Contest will be announced. A bit *late*, but . . . if *you* had to judge over five thousand submissions you'd understand why it took so long! Anyway . . .

Hang in there.

Jim Shooter
Editor in Chief

CHECK LIST

- ☐ **THE THING #31**
- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #226**
- ☐ **NEW MUTANTS #35**
- ☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #10**
- ☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS #4**
- ☐ **CLOAK AND DAGGER #4**—A **Secret Wars II** cross-over!
- ☐ **SQUADRON SUPREME (Limited Series) #5**
- ☐ **CONAN THE KING #32**
- ☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #2**—Featuring everyone from Beast to Cleat
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #272**—Introducing a major, new Spider-foe . . . SLYDE!
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #313**
- ☐ **POWER PACK #18**—Kurse arrives in this **Secret Wars II** cross-over!
- ☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #30**
- ☐ **INDIANA JONES #33**
- ☐ **DAZZLER #41**
- ☐ **MICRONAUTS #16**—The Beyonder enters the Microverse in this **Secret Wars II** cross-over!
- ☐ **LONGSHOT (Limited Series) #5**
- ☐ **VISION AND SCARLET WITCH (Limited Series) #4**
- ☐ **X-MEN ANNUAL #9**—With the New Mutants and . . . Loki! By CHRIS CLAREMONT and ART ADAMS!
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR INDEX #2**—The low-down on what happened in issues #25-50!
- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #315**
- ☐ **AVENGERS #263**—The Sub-Mariner joins up in this preview **X-Factor** cross-over!
- ☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #178**
- ☐ **MARVEL TALES #183**
- ☐ **X-MEN #201**
- ☐ **ROM #74**
- ☐ **POWER MAN/IRON FIST #121**—See the Beyonder as you've never seen him before in this **Secret Wars II** cross-over!
- ☐ **SOLOMON KANE (Limited Series) #3**
- ☐ **G.I. JOE #43**
- ☐ **NIGHTCRAWLER (Limited Series) #3**
- ☐ **ETERNALS (Limited Series) #4**
- ☐ **BALDER THE BRAVE (Limited Series) #2**—Continuing from **Thor #362**, by WALTER SIMONSON and SAL BUSCEMA!
- ☐ **MARVEL SAGA #2**—Relive the origins of Spider-Man and the Hulk, and more!
- ☐ **THE PUNISHER (Limited Series) #1**—He's on his own at last, because **you demanded it!** Written by STEVEN GRANT. Art by MIKE ZECK and JOHN BEATTY.
- ☐ **HOWARD THE DUCK #32**
- ☐ **X-MEN/ALPHA FLIGHT (Limited Series) #2**
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #286**—Don't miss this **X-Factor** preview cross-over!
- ☐ **IRON MAN #202**
- ☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #110**
- ☐ **DEFENDERS #151**
- ☐ **STAR WARS #103**
- ☐ **THOR #363**—Kurse is on the rampage in this **Secret Wars II** cross-over!
- ☐ **TRANSFORMERS #12**
- ☐ **SECRET WARS II (Limited Series) #7**—Can even the Beyonder bring about a golden age on earth?
- ☐ **SECTAURS #4**
- ☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP INDEX #1**—Meet all of Spidey's guest-stars from issues #1-35!
- ☐ **HANDBOOK OF THE CONAN UNIVERSE**—A treasure trove of information about Conan and the Hyborian Age!
- ☐ **DOCTOR WHO #16**

MARVEL MAGAZINES

- ☐ **MARVEL AGE #34**
- ☐ **MARVEL FANFARE #24**—Beginning the return to Weirdworld!
- ☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #119**
- ☐ **SAVAGE TALES #2**—More intense action tales by GRAY MORROW, JOHN SEVERIN, MIKE GOLDEN, HERB TRIMPE and WILLIAM JUNGKUNTZ!

EPIC COMICS

- ☐ **SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #4**
- ☐ **MOONSHADOW (Limited Series) #5**
- ☐ **STARSTRUCK (Limited Series) #5**
- ☐ **GROO THE WANDERER #11**
- ☐ **THE ONE (Limited Series) #3**
- ☐ **ELFQUEST #6**—The menace of Madcoil!
- ☐ **COYOTE #15**
- ☐ **TIMESPIRITS #7**
- ☐ **EPIC ILLUSTRATED #33**—The conclusion of TIM CONRAD's "Toadswart," plus more illustrated tales by JOHN BYRNE, MIKE SAENZ, MIKE VOSBURG, DAN DAY, PHIL HALE, and MIKE BARON and JOHN TOTLEBEN!

STAR COMICS

- ☐ **PLANET TERRY #10**—Princess Ugly returns . . . but so does Vermin the Vile!
- ☐ **PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #5**—Beware the Senior Simians!
- ☐ **WALLY THE WIZARD #10**
- ☐ **EWOKS #5**—Only Wicket and Kneesaa can save the forest . . . they hope!
- ☐ **ROYAL ROY #5**—Presenting the royal Olympics!
- ☐ **MUPPET BABIES #5**—There's danger in the Temple of Zoom!
- ☐ **GETALONG GANG #5**
- ☐ **CARE BEARS #2**—Watch out for the Green-Eyed Monster!

GRAPHIC NOVEL

- ☐ **GN #20: HOOKEY**—Spider-Man meets a cute little girl—who takes him on the most *monstrous* adventure of his career! It's an adventure into fear by SUSAN K. PUTNEY (writer) and BERNI WRIGHTSON (artist)!